

ANTITRUST AND COMMUNICATIONS REFORM ACT OF 1995

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 4, 1995

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as an original cosponsor of legislation introduced today which proposes to update our Nation's communications laws for the information age.

Introduced by my colleague JOHN DINGELL, this legislation embodies measures—H.R. 3626 and H.R. 3636—which were approved in overwhelming fashion by the House in the previous Congress. Together, these bills represented the Nation's roadmap for the information superhighway. I want to commend my distinguished colleague, Mr. DINGELL, for quickly bringing these issues to the attention of the House by introducing this legislation on the opening day of the 104th Congress.

Although approved by impressive margins in the House, the Senate was unable to complete work on a similar measure due to a number of factors, including the lack of sufficient days remaining in the legislative calendar.

Titles III, IV, V, and VI of the bill introduced today consist of the language of H.R. 3636, which I introduced in the 103d Congress with Representative JACK FIELDS. Working closely in bipartisan fashion with our other subcommittee colleagues, we were able to propose radical changes and needed reforms to our Nation's communications laws. This bill passed the House by a vote of 423 to 4 last year.

It is my hope to again work closely with now-Chairman FIELDS and other committee members, in a nonpartisan way, to repeat our legislative success in the new Congress.

The purpose of this legislation is to help consumers by promoting a national communications and information infrastructure. This legislation seeks to accomplish that goal by encouraging the deployment of advanced communications services and technologies through competition, by safeguarding ratepayers and competitors from potential anti-competitive abuses, by preserving and enhancing universal service, and by addressing longstanding legal and regulatory issues posed by the Modification of Final Judgment [MFJ], which broke up Ma Bell a decade ago.

The bill will preserve and enhance the goal of providing to all Americans high-quality phone service at just and reasonable rates. This goal of universal service is one of the proudest achievements of our Nation during the 20th century, and this legislation will ensure it endures beyond the year 2000.

Second, the legislation will promote and accelerate competition to the cable television industry by permitting telephone companies to compete in offering video programming. Specifically, the bill would rescind the statutory ban on telephone company ownership and delivery of video programming. Telephone companies would be permitted, through a separate subsidiary, to provide video programming to their subscribers so long as they establish an open system to permit others to use their video platforms. But they must enter the business the old fashioned way: by building a new system and not just through buying up an existing system.

In addition, the legislation will promote competition in the local telephone market. This market is one of the last monopoly markets in the entire telecommunications universe. We all have witnessed how the long distance market and the telecommunications equipment market has benefited tremendously from competition. Just 10 years ago, you had one choice in long distance—AT&T—and one choice for a phone—black rotary dialed.

Through Federal policies, hundreds of equipment makers and long distance companies now exist, providing rigorous competition. We can see those same benefits in the local telephone market, and thereby benefit consumers by giving them more choice at lower prices.

Moreover, the legislation addresses issues related to the breakup of AT&T. The bill lays the foundation to resolve issues with respect to the line of business restrictions placed upon the Bell operating companies at the time of the breakup. It sets the stage for determining how and when a Bell company may participate in the long distance marketplace.

In addition, this legislation stipulates the terms and conditions for Bell company participation in the information services, alarm, and equipment manufacturing markets. This legislation will effectively take these issues out of the courts and will provide a blueprint to the Federal Communications Commission, the Department of Justice, and State regulators as to how to move the industry toward greater competition while protecting consumers and competitors from the potential for monopoly abuses. This bill will also provide a modicum of certainty to participants in the marketplace, allowing CEO's, investors, and entrepreneurs to effectively plan for the future.

Again, I want to commend Mr. DINGELL for introducing this legislation. I look forward to working with him, Mr. FIELDS, Mr. BLILEY, and other committee colleagues, on legislation to overhaul the 1934 Communications Act for the 1990's.

TRIBUTE TO JOE PATERNO AND THE NITTANY LIONS

HON. WILLIAM F. CLINGER, JR.

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 4, 1995

Mr. CLINGER. Mr. Speaker, on this historic first day of the 104th Congress, I would like to publicly extend my warmest congratulations to Joe Paterno and the Nittany Lions of Penn State on their Rose Bowl victory.

As the winner of the Big Ten Conference, the Nittany Lions went to Pasadena to meet a worthy adversary, and the Oregon Ducks proved to be just that. In the end, however, Penn State triumphed, 38 to 20, after displaying fine teamwork and unrelenting determination.

With this Rose Bowl victory, Joe Paterno passes Bear Bryant as the coach with the most bowl game victories to his credit. This win completes the fifth undefeated season in his 29 years of coaching at Penn State.

The Associated Press and CNN/USA Today have awarded the national championship to another undefeated team, but in my mind Penn State has earned the right to be called a national champion.

While my colleagues from Nebraska may disagree with my assessment of Penn State's ranking, the only way to settle, once and for all, the question of which team is the national champion can only be decided in a head-to-head competition. As USA Today indicated in a cover story headline yesterday, without a match between these two undefeated teams, the question of which team is better is still open to debate.

One thing is certain, Pennsylvanians and Penn State alumni across the country can take pride in the performance of this team and the football program at Penn State. With many of the players returning next year, we may see this open question settled after all.

PROGRESS ON THE ECONOMY

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 4, 1995

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, October 26, 1994, into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

PROGRESS ON THE ECONOMY

One of the top concerns of Hoosiers remains the economy and the economic outlook. Hoosiers are concerned about the budget deficit, our international competitiveness, and especially jobs and job security. At the same time, most recognize that progress is being made and that the economy is doing better now than it has for years. Over the last two years we have made major progress on the budget deficit. That in turn has given a significant boost to the economy. We need to build on these successes and continue the basic policies that have helped turn things around. Certainly there is still much room for improvement in the economy, but there is little evidence that our economic policy needs a major change in direction.

PROGRESS ON THE ECONOMY

In January 1993, both the federal deficit and federal spending as a share of the economy were spiraling upward, while the economy was in the slowest recovery of the post-war era. The President and Congress passed the deficit reduction package last year which led to a dramatic drop in the deficit, and also has sparked a steady, sustainable economic recovery. Critics were saying that the package would cause a recession and higher unemployment. It has had just the opposite effect, boosting the economy in several key ways.

Deficit reduction: The \$430 billion deficit reduction package means that the deficit will decline for three years in a row—the first time that has happened since the Truman Administration. We are finally getting a handle on the deficit—bringing it down from \$290 billion in 1992 to a projected \$160 billion next year. That will make the deficit as a share of the economy the lowest since 1979, and one of the lowest of all the major industrialized countries.

By 1998 the national debt will be \$650 billion lower than was projected before the passage of the deficit reduction plan. (Two-thirds of this comes directly from the deficit reduction package, the rest from the strengthened economy.) That's \$10,800 of reduced federal debt for each family of four in Indiana. We need to continue these deficit reduction efforts rather than reverse course.

Growth: The U.S. economy is growing at a solid, sustainable pace. The rate of economic